MR. COCKERELL'S LECTURES ON ARCHITECTURE.

On Thursday, the 9th instant, Professor Cockerell delivered the introductory lecture of his course on Architecture at the Royal Academy. He pointed out the insufficiency of six lectures to convey any adequate knowledge of the principles of architecture, and that all the professor could do was to give the proper bent to the studies of his hearers. Himself risen from the ranks of the profession, he could better enforce the dictum of Vitruvius, that it was the union of theory and practice which made the skilful architect. He strongly urged the importance of present studies, for which every encouragement and great facilities were afforded by the Institute of British Architects, and by the courses at King's College and the London University.

There was a distinction between genius and taste; one was the gift of Nature, but taste was to be acquired by learning and by examination of the history of past times. The lecturer was limited to uphold the authority of former times. The difficulty to define taste was great, yet all men would confess ignorance, but never want of taste. It had been perhaps best explained as "that sensitive rectitude or refinement of judgment which we call taste." Genius was essential to success in the arts; but taste, or learning, was demanded of the architect, and it did seem that a certain respect for the practice of former times was desirable and necessary in him. There was great contention in the present day about styles; one cried out for something suited to the climate, another for a style nurtured in the country. The Germans, who had not long ago emerged from semi-barbarism, had sought in the stories of Wodin for a mythology to supplant the old; but the respect of ages was not yet to be set at naught, and the love of classic art would again prevail, let present opinion say what it would. In architecture, learning was essential, and the only safe course was, not by acting counter to, but in the spirit of those rules which ages had registered. The art was built on the accumulated evidence of former times; that calculated to satisfy the future must be founded upon the preceding. Pope had well said:—

"When first young Maro, in his boundless mind,
A work to outlast immortal Rome design'd,
Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
And but from Nature's fountains scorned to draw:
But when to examine every part he came,
Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.
Convinced, amazed, he checks the bold design,
And rules as strict his labour'd work confine,
As if the Stagyrite o'erlooked each line.
Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem,—
To copy nature is to copy them."

In the present day all styles were in request; the scholar desired to be reminded in his residence of the people the first in learning and in art; the titled possessor of broad lands erected the donjon keep in the pride of feudal times; each class had its particular association. The absurd turns which style had taken in our own recollection, were almost beyond our own powers of belief. The accident that made Sir Wm. Chambers a supercargo, first gave us the Chinese style; the work of Denon flooded us with the Egyptian; had Algiers or Mogador presented the least thing available, our neighbours, more susceptible than we are, would have taken it up. Fashion would have its day; it warped our taste; and the architect's only proper course was to have his buildings constructed upon permanent principles, recurring to history, and regardless of the fashion of the day. Pope said:—

"Something there is more needful than expense,
And something previous e'en to taste—'tis sense;
Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,
And, though no science, fairly worth the seven."

The efforts of professors were now more than ever necessary, as, without unwarrantable complaining, it must be said that the present state of taste was bad. He considered so from the absence of all originality, the complete indifference of the public to style, and the indiscriminate practice of all styles. Competition, in which the old and young were mixed up together, was also injurious to the interests of art. The art likewise suffered greatly from the undue influence of engineers, who were entirely utilitarian in art, caring nothing for taste, and absolutely riding over the architect. The beautiful balustrade of a bridge had been swept away entire by an engineer, and replaced with an unsightly wall, and *without a remonstrance*. The buildings of our greatest architect did not escape. Nevertheless, there was all to hope from the future, and Barry's prediction might be held as true, that "he had lived a hundred years too soon." Great works *had* been impossible, and in one "glorious" war was spent as much as would have raised 800 public buildings. Royal patronage had done every thing for art abroad; it would be seen what public patronage could do in England, and it behoved the students to employ their time in such manner as to benefit the art.

The lecture concluded shortly after nine o'clock, amidst the general applause of an attentive audience. We did not notice many of our older professional brethren amongst the professor's auditors; we trust they will attend his succeeding lectures, as their presence is a compliment which his services merit.

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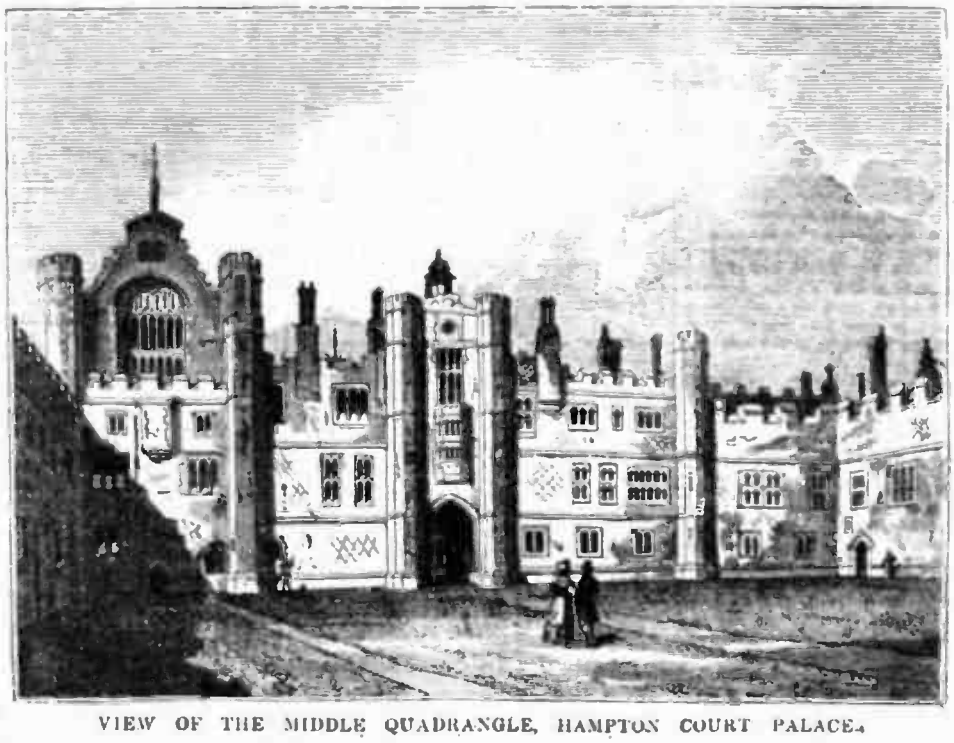
New Books.

Old England. Edited and Published by Chas. Knight. London, 1844. Vol. I.

The first volume of this extraordinary work, which is literally what it professes to be, a pictorial museum of regal, ecclesiastical, baronial, municipal, and popular antiquities, is now completed, and includes the British period, Roman period, Anglo-Saxon period, and the period from the Norman conquest to the end of the reign of Richard III., A.D. 1485. It contains no less than 1,390 illustrations, twelve of which are illuminated engravings, folio size, for a sum which is so small, as to put the book within the reach of all classes. Unlike what were called cheap books formerly, it may be depended on too, and we again say, conscientiously, that it is an extraordinary work. Amongst the illuminated illustrations are views of the interior of the Temple Church, Edward the Confessor's Chapel, at Westminster, Henry the Seventh's Chapel, and the Oratory of the Beauchamp Chapel, Warwick.

The subjoined specimen of the wood engravings, representing the middle quadrangle of Hampton Court Palace, is not by any means one of the best, but was selected by us that we might remind our readers of the proximity of this interesting structure to the metropolis, and induce those who have not been there to visit it. The chapel, the great hall, and various offices, remain as they were built by Wolsey and King Henry VIII.

The collection of pictures is full of interest, especially as historical illustrations, and, to crown all, there are Raphael's cartoons for our study and admiration.



VIEW OF THE MIDDLE QUADRANGLE, HAMPTON COURT PALACE.

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